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What is claimed is:

1. A circuit comprising:

a capacitor formed with a dielectric including the dielectric encasing elements of the circuit; and

5 a detector to detect changes in the capacitance of the capacitor.

2. The circuit of claim 1 in which the capacitor further comprises:

approximately parallel conductors located proximate to circuit elements to protect from tampering.

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3. The circuit of claim 1 in which the detector further comprises:

a comparator to compare a reference voltage with a voltage at a node of the capacitor.

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4. The circuit of claim 1 in which the detector further comprises:

a disable output terminal to provide a signal to disable an operation of the circuit.

5. A circuit comprising:

a detector comprising a capacitor formed from conductive elements arranged such that removal of dielectric material from the vicinity of the conductive elements results in
5 assertion of a signal disabling one or more operations of the circuit.

6. The circuit of claim 5, the detector adapted to assert the signal as a result of a change in a capacitance of the capacitor.

7. The circuit of claim 5, the conductive elements arranged approximately parallel and proximate to elements of the circuit to protect from tampering.

8. The circuit of claim 5, the detector further comprising:

a comparator to compare a reference voltage with a voltage at one of the conductive elements.

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9. A method comprising:

disabling one or more operations of a circuit upon detecting a change in a capacitance resulting from removal of dielectric material from the vicinity of conductive elements of the circuit.

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10. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

the change in capacitance resulting from removal of dielectric material from the vicinity of approximately parallel conductors located proximate to circuit elements to protect from tampering.

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11. The method of claim 11 further comprising:

forming a capacitor using approximately parallel conductors located proximate to circuit elements to protect from tampering; and
comparing a reference voltage with a voltage at a node of the capacitor.

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12. A computer system comprising:

a processor coupled to a memory by way of a bus; and
the processor comprising a detector, the detector comprising a capacitor formed from conductive elements arranged such that removal of dielectric material from the vicinity of the conductive elements results in assertion of a signal disabling one or more operations of the circuit.

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13. The system of claim 12, the detector adapted to assert the signal as a result of a change in a capacitance of the capacitor.

14. The system of claim 12, the conductive elements arranged approximately parallel and proximate to elements of the processor to protect from tampering.

15. The processor of claim 12, the detector further comprising:

a comparator to compare a reference voltage with a voltage at one of the
conductive elements.

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1. A method for determining a voltage at one of the
conductive elements of a device, comprising:
providing a reference voltage;
providing a voltage at one of the
conductive elements;
comparing the reference voltage with the voltage at one of the
conductive elements;
determining a voltage at one of the
conductive elements based on the comparison.